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Partnership dialogues

Increasing economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

Concept paper prepared by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present concept paper for the partnership dialogue on the theme "Increasing economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets", prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/303, relates to targets 14.7 and 14.b of the Sustainable Development Goals. The paper is based on [illegible] received from Member States, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and other stakeholders.[1]

2. Partnership dialogue 5 addresses two distinct but interrelated targets under Goal 14: increasing the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism (target 14.7), and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets (target 14.b). A discussion of these two targets must include a range of linked but distinct issues. Oceans provide a wide array of benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries, including, but not limited to, small-scale, artisanal fisheries. Likewise, small-scale artisanal fishers are a

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[1] Given the word limit, not all inputs have been included in their entirety, but they can be accessed at https://oceanconference.un.org/documents.

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fundamental part of coastal societies in small island developing States and least developed countries, but they can also be found in developed and other developing countries. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines small-scale or artisanal fisheries as "traditional fisheries involving fishing households (as opposed to commercial companies), using relatively small amounts of capital and energy, relatively small fishing vessels (if any), making short fishing trips, close to shore, mainly for local consumption".[2] Estimates suggest that workers involved in small-scale fisheries comprise over 90 per cent of people employed globally in capture fisheries and related activities, and produce approximately half of the global catch.[3]

3. An effective examination of these issues will require a holistic, integrated approach that takes into account not only their inherent diversity, but also the close links to other Sustainable Development Goals. The unifying theme is livelihoods, primarily from fishing, but also from aquaculture, tourism and other ecosystem services. This means that the discussion can be informed by other Goals, in particular Goal 1 (end poverty), Goal 2 (end hunger), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 12 (sustainable consumption and production) and Goal 13 (combat climate change). There are also close links to the other targets under Goal 14.

II. Status and trends

Least developed countries and small island developing States

4. Small island developing States face unique sustainable development challenges, including the small size of their populations, their limited resources, their vulnerability to natural disasters and external shocks and their high dependence on foreign imports. Their growth and development are often hampered by the high transportation and communications costs, the disproportionately high costs of their public administration and infrastructure due to their small size, and the lack or near-lack of opportunities to create economies of scale. Small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, such as sea level rise, droughts, floods, coastal surges and typhoons (also known as hurricanes or cyclones). Climate change also affects their marine ecosystems, which are vital in their own right and form an integral part of their economies in sectors such as fisheries and tourism.

5. Many small island developing States have maritime zones that are disproportionately larger than their land territory. The size of the exclusive economic zone of Tuvalu, for instance, is more than 26,000 times that of its land mass. Small island developing States are therefore highly dependent on healthy and productive oceans for their economic development and for the livelihoods of their populations. Currently the predominant ocean-dependent industries in small island developing States are tourism and fisheries. Income from fisheries originates not only from direct exports, but also from licence fees collected from foreign fishing vessels. Other ocean-related industries with increasing potential to deliver benefits are aquaculture, the offshore generation of renewable energy, deep-sea mineral activities and marine biotechnology and bioprospecting. Promising sustainable energy sources include tidal streams, ocean waves, offshore solar, ocean currents and liquid biofuels (for shipping).

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[2] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), "Artisanal fisheries", Family Farming Knowledge Platform, updated 2015, available at http://www.fao.org/family-farming/detail/en/c/335263.

[3] FAO, "Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication" (Rome, 2015).

6. Coastal least developed countries often face many of the same challenges as small island developing States, and least developed countries in general are characterized by an insufficient availability of human and institutional capacities, low income levels and unequally distributed income, and a scarcity of domestic financial resources. Their largely agrarian economies are affected by low productivity and low investment, which are mutually reinforcing. They rely on the export of a small number of primary commodities, which makes them highly vulnerable to external terms-of-trade shocks. However, like small island developing States, least developed countries can potentially access significant opportunities in fisheries and other ocean-related sectors. Fish ranks among the top-five export products of 14 of the 48 least developed countries. In addition, 6 of the 16 largest suppliers of fish from inland waters are least developed countries, and one of those, Uganda, is a landlocked developing country.[4]

7. Fisheries management in small island developing States and least developed countries continues to improve, as does the economic value that they derive from fisheries. In the Pacific region, for instance, conventional fisheries management is shifting from single-species maximization to more holistic approaches encompassing biological, environmental, economic and social objectives. Other fisheries-related measures to enhance the economic prosperity of small island developing States and least developed countries include policy and governance support programmes; coastal fisheries assessment and census programmes; sustainable aquaculture support programmes; protected area management programmes; legal provisions on threatened species (e.g., implementation of listings under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora); biosecurity and introduced species programmes; integrated land and ocean management programmes; climate change adaptation and resilience programmes; disaster risk management and emergency assistance for the re-establishment of fisheries affected by natural disasters; fisher safety at sea programmes; programmes to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and other capacity development activities. In addition, small island developing States and least developed countries are incorporating traditional knowledge into resource use practices and plans.

8. Nonetheless, small island developing States and least developed countries often lack the technical, institutional, technological and financial support that would let them benefit fully from their marine resources. For instance, their relationships with foreign countries that fish in their waters are often complex. By licensing foreign vessels to fish in their exclusive economic zones they can add significantly to their national income. However, if the fees are linked to current world fish prices, the resulting instability can increase their vulnerability. In addition they often lack the institutional and human capacity to develop their own fishing industries. Small island developing States and least developed countries, including those that are landlocked, also suffer from a lack of capacity to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the growing aquaculture sector.

9. Small island developing States derive significant economic benefit not only from fisheries, but also from tourism, which is overwhelmingly based on oceans, coasts and marine resources. The number of international tourists visiting small island developing States increased from 28 million in 2000 to 41 million in 2013. Tourism accounts for over one quarter of the gross domestic product in many such States and represents 9 per cent of their overall exports. It provides jobs for their communities, depending on the state of development of the local tourism industry.

[4] See FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture: Contributing to Food Security and Nutrition for All* (Rome, 2016).

In small island developing States and in other countries around the world, recreational fisheries are an important element of the tourism sector, and underwater cultural heritage and the outstanding aesthetic quality of coral reef ecosystems have high tourism development potential and can help to create income and employment. Studies show that 37 per cent of world tourism is related to culture and that there is a strong link between the protection of cultural heritage and ecosystems on the one hand and increases in tourism on the other.

10. The tourism industry in small island developing States and coastal least developed countries is taking steps towards enhanced sustainability by improving waste management and energy-efficiency, increasing local employment, building and maintaining local supply chains, managing informal local trading, fostering community-based initiatives and protecting underwater cultural heritage.

11. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. It is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector. It stipulates the limits of the various maritime zones and provides for the rights and duties of States in those zones, including those of small island developing States and least developed countries.[5]

Small-scale artisanal fisheries

12. The small-scale, artisanal fisheries sector, which encompasses all activities along the value chain — pre-harvest, harvest and post-harvest — employs men and women in almost equal measure, with a high female participation in fish processing and small-scale fish trading operations.[6] Some 90 to 95 per cent of the catch produced by small-scale landings is destined for local human consumption.[7] In some developing countries, including small island developing States, small-scale fisheries provide more than 60 per cent of the protein intake of the population. Many indigenous peoples and their communities rely on small-scale fisheries, and recent estimates show that coastal indigenous peoples eat, on average, 15 times more seafood per person than non-indigenous people in the same country.[8] The role of the small-scale artisanal fisheries sector in food security and nutrition is often underestimated or ignored, and its production is rarely reported separately in national catch statistics.

13. In 2014, after a long participatory consultation process, the members of the FAO Committee on Fisheries endorsed a new internationally negotiated instrument dedicated specifically to small-scale fisheries that complements the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication set out principles and guidance for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries governance and development. The aim of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines is to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security and economic growth. In addition, they contain direct references to the 2012 Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security of the Committee on

[5] See also the concept paper for partnership dialogue 7.

[6] High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Nutrition (Rome, FAO, 2014).

[7] World Bank, *Hidden Harvest*, report No. 66469-GLB (Washington, D.C., 2012).

[8] Andrés Cisneros-Montemayor and others, "A global estimate of seafood consumption by coastal indigenous peoples", *PloS One*, vol. 11, No. 12 (December 2016).

World Food Security (CFS), which support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.

14. Regional developments specific to small island developing States that complement global trends include the following:

(a) Caribbean region: A Caribbean regional consultation on the development of international guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries, held by FAO, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission in 2012, confirmed the importance of small-scale fisheries as a contributor to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security, and economic development in the Caribbean region;

(b) Indian Ocean region: the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Commission recently adopted a new regional fisheries and aquaculture strategy for the period 2015-2025. Its overarching objective is to enable the fisheries and aquaculture sector in States members of the Indian Ocean Commission to fully realize its potential as a contributor to sustainable and equitable growth in the region;

(c) Pacific region: at its ninth meeting, held in 2015, the Pacific Community Heads of Fisheries endorsed the strategy entitled "A new song for coastal fisheries — pathways to change: the Noumea strategy". In doing so, the participants acknowledged the need to pay closer attention to the coastal fisheries sector. In addition, the Vessel Day Scheme, which enables vessel owners to purchase and trade days fishing at sea, is currently being implemented by the eight Pacific island countries that are parties to the Nauru Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest. Parties to the Nauru Agreement control waters that yield 50 per cent of the world's tuna.[9]

15. In all regions there is a growing recognition that small-scale fishers can be important actors in the implementation and monitoring of fish management systems and that the most effective approaches include their participation. Increasingly fish management systems incorporate traditional practices within a tenure-based governance framework, which helps to relieve some of the pressures from overfishing and overcapacity.

16. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (the Fish Stocks Agreement) set out the legal regime for fisheries, including small-scale artisanal fisheries. They contain several provisions that are particularly relevant to small-scale and artisanal fishers, such as those that impose a duty to take into account the interests of artisanal and subsistence fishers and to avoid adverse impacts on, and ensure access to fishing grounds by subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fishers.

17. The General Assembly has addressed the challenges faced by small island developing States and least developed countries, as well as issues related to small-scale fisheries, in its resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and sustainable fisheries. For example, in its resolution 71/123, the Assembly urged States and relevant international and national organizations to provide for the participation of small-scale fishery stakeholders in related policy development and fisheries management strategies in order to achieve long-term sustainability for such fisheries, consistent with the duty to ensure the proper conservation and management of fisheries resources.

[9] See http://www.pnatuna.com/VDS and the concept note for partnership dialogue 4.

III. Challenges and opportunities

18. Many of the issues facing small island developing States and least developed countries, as well as those facing small-scale fishers, are linked to the megatrends affecting the world at large. Globalization, trade flows, climate change and other forms of environmental degradation, and inequality all make it more difficult for the populations of such countries, in particular their small-scale artisanal fishers, to reap benefits from the ocean. The vulnerabilities specific to such countries, including small scale, remoteness from market hubs, vulnerability to climate change, inadequate infrastructure, gaps in data and statistics capacity, weak governance structures and lack of recognition of tenure and rights, exacerbate those global challenges.

Accessing and benefiting from marine resources

19. As noted above, the vulnerabilities of small island developing States and least developed countries are well known and significant. The long-term sustainability of fisheries resources in small island developing States has been threatened by overexploitation, land-based pollution, climate change and natural disasters, and the inadequacy of fisheries monitoring and control systems. Inshore capture fisheries adjacent to centres of urban population are heavily fished, if not overfished.

20. Small-scale artisanal fishers tend to fish in areas close to the coast and within the exclusive economic zone of a country. Their access to marine resources is compromised in a number of ways, such as by competition from large-scale fishing operations and persistent gaps in essential infrastructure. There is often competition within the small fisheries sector and from other sectors such as tourism, aquaculture, agriculture, energy, mining, manufacturing and the development of infrastructure. Small-scale artisanal fisheries also suffer from high post-harvest losses because of low investment, low-level technology, variability in supply and contamination from land-based pollution, especially during rainy periods.

21. In small island developing States in particular, the growth of coastal tourism brings with it a host of challenges, including the loss of fragile habitats and biodiversity, marine and land-based pollution, inadequate waste management, resource consumption and competition, and limited community engagement and benefit. The tourism industry in small island developing States and coastal least developed countries faces a specific challenge in that warm-water corals, which are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, form a major part of what makes many tourist resorts in the Caribbean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia attractive. Experts predict that by 2050, most of the world's tropical and subtropical coral reefs, particularly those in shallow waters, will suffer from annual bleaching and will eventually become functionally extinct as sources of goods and services. The severity of the impact of coral bleaching will no doubt be exacerbated by the influx of pollution from land-based sources. In addition, small island developing States and least developed countries often lack the capacity to protect and to facilitate responsible public access to their underwater cultural heritage when it is threatened by pillage, commercial treasure-hunting and the negative impact of some industrial activities.

22. High-impact weather events can critically affect both fisheries and tourism. Thus, long-term sustainable development needs tailored tools to prevent disasters and to make local communities more resilient. Multi-hazard early warning systems provide a useful management tool in that regard. The World Meteorological Organization is developing all elements of a multi-hazard early warning system along the value chain, including research (the World Weather Research Programme

and its High-Impact Weather project), operations (the Global Data-processing and Forecasting System) and communication (the Public Weather Services Programme).

Accessing markets

23. For small-scale artisanal fishers able to access marine resources, the next step in the process, access to markets, presents additional challenges. Their tenure and their rights of access to their resources are not necessarily recognized or respected, making the capture of fish problematic and subject to direct competition from large-scale fishing. Moreover, although tariffs on fish and fish products are relatively low, with an average of 11.6 per cent under the most-favoured nation tariff, it is extremely difficult for small-scale operators to ensure homogeneity in quality, safety and handling practices, as well as in transport and packaging. Agricultural and fish products are generally more exposed to non-tariff measures than industrial manufactures, owing in part to sanitary and phytosanitary measures. For instance, by September 2015, 732 sanitary and phytosanitary measures and 524 technical barriers to trade applicable to fish and fish products had been notified by members of the World Trade Organization, representing a significant annual growth since 2010.[10]

24. The predominantly artisanal or traditional nature of fishing in small island developing States and least developed countries, which coexists side by side with emerging industrial fishing, makes it more difficult for such countries to enforce international standards imposed by major importing markets. For that reason, some small island developing States rely exclusively on fees from fishing licence agreements as an alternative to complying with the international standards imposed by importing countries.

25. Market access for small-scale artisanal fisheries is further restricted by gaps in infrastructure, a lack of investment in or credit for small operators, a lack of common fishery policies among countries that share water resources, and a shortfall in the technological and professional skills needed to meet global safety and quality standards. Those issues are often compounded by power imbalances that favour intermediaries with better access to financial services and market information. Poor countries also lack the capacity to implement international regulations such as vessel enrolment, catch documentation schemes and catch reporting systems. Non-compliance can lead to a vicious circle of restricted access to foreign markets, leading in turn to stagnation in the development of the fisheries industry, which then makes it even more difficult to access those markets.

26. Shipping trends and practices erect yet another barrier for small island developing States and least developed countries, as well as for small-scale artisanal fishers trying to access global markets. According to the International Maritime Organization, over 90 per cent of the volume of international trade in goods is carried out by sea. As shipping networks make use of ever-larger vessels and trans-shipment in hub-and-spoke systems, the remote locations and less-developed port infrastructure of many such countries become significant handicaps. Some of them are served by a very small number of regular container shipping services, which has the potential to lead to oligopolistic or even monopolistic markets. The Liner Shipping Connectivity Index, which has been published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development since 2004, measures countries' access to international shipping services. In 2016, the 10 countries with the lowest value on the Index were all small island developing States.

[10] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Trade and Environment Review 2016: Fish Trade* (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2016/3), part 2.

Opportunities

27. In spite of the various challenges noted above, small island developing States and least developed countries have significant opportunities to reap economic benefit from having ocean-based economies that reconcile economic development with improved livelihoods and social equity while strengthening sustainable, transparent, reliable and more secure food systems. Maximizing those opportunities will require a multi-stakeholder approach in which the ministries responsible for tourism, environment, fisheries, transport and trade, finance and other domains work together to promote sustainable development and economic growth. Fishers and fishery workers are key stakeholders who can play an important role in the development of the ocean-based economy. Civil society can give them the voice they need to fulfil that role.

28. Important actions include implementing policies that promote business activity without increasing pressure on fisheries and improving access to education to foster community development and empowerment and the protection of natural and cultural heritage sites. The transfer and dissemination of fishing technology, as well as the recognition of rights and the granting of preferential access to coastal fishing grounds and improving market infrastructure can also help communities to derive maximum benefits from marine resources in their area. In addition, stakeholders point to the importance of expanding the availability of high-quality data as a prerequisite to effective decision-making. Collaboration among small island developing States and other forms of South-South collaboration will be crucial as well.

29. Voluntary sustainability standards, eco-labelling and traceability systems for wild catch and aquaculture are increasingly significant in the fisheries sector as consumer demand for sustainability, fair trade, organic and biotrade products continues to grow. Seafood production certified under global sustainability initiatives grew fortyfold from 2003 to 2015 and now represents more than 14 per cent of global production. Such standards are becoming a requirement for entry into the markets of some developed countries. As noted above, small-scale artisanal fishers often lack the capacity to implement global regulation programmes, but developing countries and their partners can encourage the uptake of certification schemes by lowering the barriers to entry, including, for instance, by clustering several small fishers in one application.

30. There are opportunities to overcome shipping challenges by investing in trade facilitation and port performance, including, possibly, through public-private partnerships. Steps such as redesigning routes and using feeder and trans-shipment services may also help to increase cargo volumes and strengthen the business case for servicing small island developing States.

31. The following areas represent additional opportunities:

(a) Aquaculture will be an important element of ocean-based economies. In the States members of the Caribbean Community, aquaculture development could increase total fish production by 30 per cent within 10 years if essential investments are made in aquaculture policy, legal frameworks, applied research, capacity-building and information;[11]

(b) The use of marine living resources such as algae in the production of pharmaceuticals and chemicals will be significant, as will the trade in non-edible seafood products for use in cosmetics;

[11] See "Global blue growth initiative and small island developing States" (FAO, 2014).

(c) Marine renewable energy sources, including wave, tidal and ocean thermal energy conversion, have been identified as priority areas for small island developing States in, for example, the recent Martinique Action Plan for Renewable Energy Development on Islands. The Martinique Action Plan contains a call for concrete action to support the transition to renewable energy sources in small island developing States, including to ocean energy;

(d) The deep-sea exploration of minerals and resources has been of particular interest to many small island developing States in the Pacific region. Some of those States have granted permits for deep-sea mineral exploration. Thus far only Papua New Guinea has issued a mining licence for ocean floor mining. The International Seabed Authority offers capacity-building and knowledge transfer services to ensure that small island developing States and least developed countries benefit from any activities relating to deep-sea minerals that they undertake, while safeguarding against damage to their marine environments and underwater cultural heritage sites;

(e) Marine biotechnology could provide an environmentally sustainable opportunity for small island developing States and coastal least developed countries to let their ocean-based economies grow;

(f) Marine spatial planning enables Governments and companies to identify the most suitable geographic area for an activity with a view to promoting the efficient use of maritime space, increasing efficiency of decision-making, reducing conflicts, creating a better investment climate and reducing costs;

(g) Underwater cultural heritage sites and related research for educational and recreational purposes holds much potential for small island developing States and least developed countries;

(h) Maritime transport, ports and related services, shipping and shipbuilding provide additional opportunities for growth.

IV. Existing partnerships

32. The theme of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Apia in 2014, was the sustainable development of small island developing States through genuine and durable partnerships. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the importance of partnerships is stressed, particularly for least developed countries and other countries in special situations. The international community has initiated numerous partnerships addressing the sustainable use and development of oceans for small island developing States and least developed countries. Of the 308 partnerships represented at the Conference, more than a third (109) were related to oceans. In many such partnerships the private sector is an essential partner in improving the economic benefits reaped by small island developing States.

33. Current partnership priorities include strengthening the capacity of public institutions to promote small-scale fisheries, empowering small-scale fishing communities to take an active role in fisheries management decisions and the marketing of their products, ensuring food security in connection with best practices in fisheries and land management, building a bottom-up approach through community engagement and participation while developing requisite land-use and fisheries management policies, upholding principles of decent work, and applying a human rights-based approach to small-scale fisheries.

34. A large number of regional organizations have specifically included small-scale and coastal fisheries in their policies, strategies and initiatives. Regional organizations play an important role as catalysts for change at the national level, and there are a number of important partnerships and initiatives around coastal fisheries and small-scale fisheries at the regional and subregional levels. Many of those refer to the FAO Voluntary Guidelines as the global reference framework, which provides common ground for action.

35. Many current partnerships are also focused on areas such as investing in and developing stronger weather and climate services for reducing disaster risk, strengthening climate resilience and adaptation, advancing multi-hazard early warning systems, bridging the science-policy gap, and increasing North-South and South-South knowledge-sharing and capacity-building. A complete overview of relevant partnerships can be found at http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org.

V. Possible areas for new partnerships

36. It is vital to continue to implement existing partnerships, looking for opportunities to strengthen and expand them whenever possible and appropriate. In addition, new partnerships can complement existing efforts in a range of areas.

37. Given the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the complexity of the challenges relating to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14, it is important that Governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders approach partnerships with a holistic mindset. Member States have emphasized the need to link ocean and fisheries partnerships with, for instance, education and infrastructure assistance to help to ensure an enabling environment. Interventions in fisheries will be more effective if they are coordinated with efforts to advance sustainable agriculture wherever synergies can be found.

38. Areas for new partnerships are outlined in paragraphs 39 to 45 below, but the list is far from exhaustive.

Governance and regulatory frameworks

39. The full implementation of the international legal framework for oceans is essential to maximize the economic and non-economic benefits that small island developing States and least developed countries reap from their ocean-based economies and to effectively regulate the fishing sector, including of small-scale fisheries (see concept notes for dialogues 4 and 7). Moreover, the policy framework contained in the outcome documents of major conferences on sustainable development, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action (SAMOA) Pathway sets out concrete actions which can be taken to increase benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries, including through partnerships.

40. Institutions at the subnational, national, regional, and global levels will be at their most effective in managing ocean resources if they work in a complementary and coordinated manner. Doing so requires improving cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination at all levels and ensuring consistency and coherence between regulatory approaches at different levels, including through international institutions as appropriate. Regional fisheries management organizations, for instance, can serve as links between the various levels. They are critical players and should be supported. Partnerships can strengthen regional and global networks of institutions to advance coherence in their work.

41. Partnerships can also address the governance of tenure for small-scale fisheries and improve legal frameworks at the national and subnational levels to better reflect regional and international instruments and guidelines, in particular the FAO Voluntary Guidelines and the CFS Voluntary Guidelines. Such partnerships will be effective only if fishers and fish workers, through their organizations, are involved in every stage of the process to ensure that regulatory frameworks, policies and strategies are realistic and appropriate and that they are implemented. Member States have recognized this and have pointed out that regulations should be functional and goal-based in order to make compliance and success universal.

42. Partnerships could also address institutions working for the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of small island developing States and least developed countries in order to improve their capacities and policies and make their heritage more usable for educational and recreational purposes.

Data

43. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a whole will be measured using extensive, reliable and disaggregated data, and that exercise will depend on their availability. Goal 14 is no exception. In small island developing States, least developed countries and other countries around the world, small-scale artisanal fisheries are currently undervalued. More data are needed on fish stocks and the revenue generated by artisanal producers.

Capacity-building

44. As the backbone of the fisheries sector, fishing communities will benefit from capacity development partnerships, including partnerships involving managerial, participatory and other related skill training for fishers and their communities. Capacity-building can also address the structural, legal, management and cultural barriers that prevent women from fully accessing fisheries and resources. It is also crucial, in parallel, to build capacity in science and research as well as in cultural heritage preservation in small island developing States and least developed countries.

45. Other areas for capacity-building partnerships include:

(a) Implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines, including through activities addressing safety at sea and through support to stakeholders seeking to make legal changes to benefit small-scale fisheries and improved governance of tenure;

(b) Aquaculture technology, including technology that reduces emissions;

(c) Raising awareness of mutual insurance for fishers and aquaculture insurance;

(d) Advancing the development of invaluable underwater cultural heritage sites can yield significant benefits to small island developing States. Raising the profile of such sites can improve the ocean literacy of communities and Governments and ultimately increase economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries alike through tourism;[17]

[17] The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage have offered to make connections with their wide networks of experts, universities and non-governmental organizations not only working to research and protect underwater cultural heritage but also carrying out other kinds of ocean-related work, such as environmental projects.

(e) Building capacity in measures focused on conservation of, for example, marine protected areas, to complement fisheries management measures, while acknowledging that conservation efforts can at times burden the livelihoods of small-scale fishers, and can disproportionately burden small island developing States themselves.

VI. Guiding questions for the dialogue

46. The guiding questions for the dialogue are the following:

(a) What measures are needed for small island developing States and least developed countries to enhance their productivity, diversify their exports of ocean and marine resources, enable them to capitalize on marine biotechnology, advance their use of marine energy, increase their global competitiveness and enable them to make other related progress?

(b) How can small island developing States and least developed countries deepen their engagement in the tourism sector, including through the promotion of their natural and cultural heritage?

(c) How can small-scale artisanal fishing communities be empowered to ensure their secure access to marine resources and markets, the responsible use of marine resources and the equal distribution of benefits derived from the use of those resources?

(d) How can multi-level implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines and directly linked instruments such as the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security be accelerated?